

**Statement on Senate Action on the  
“Immigration Control and Financial  
Responsibility Act of 1996”**

*May 2, 1996*

The Senate has taken an important step today by passing with bipartisan support the Immigration Control and Financial Responsibility Act of 1996, important legislation which ratifies my administration's comprehensive immigration strategy to reverse decades of neglect and restore the rule of law to our immigration system.

This bill builds upon the historic progress we are making. Over the last 3 years, I have directed my administration to use every tool at its disposal to crack down on illegal immigration and to reintroduce the rule of law at the border and in the workplace. We have made illegal crossings at the Southwest border tougher than ever before by increasing manpower by 50 percent and employing state-of-the-art technology. We are deporting record numbers of criminal and other illegal aliens from the United States, and we have put teeth into our immigration laws in the workplace. Earlier this year, I signed an Executive order barring employers who knowingly hire illegal workers from receiving Federal contracts.

I am pleased that the Senate has endorsed our strategy with legislation that answers my administration's call for tougher penalties for alien smugglers, criminal aliens, and manufacturers and sellers of fraudulent documents. The Senate bill also supports our plan to continue to increase the size of our Border Patrol and provides the Justice Department with new tools to fight illegal immigration. While this bill strongly supports our enforcement efforts, it still goes too far in denying legal immigrants access to vital safety net programs which could jeopardize public health and safety. Some work still needs to be done. I urge the Congress to move quickly to finalize and send me this key legislation.

**Statement on the Initiative To  
Reduce Tobacco Use**

*May 2, 1996*

Smoking is a pediatric disease that shows no sign of abating, in part because young people are constantly barraged by messages that glamour and grit can be found in pack of cigarettes.

My administration has proposed the Nation's first comprehensive initiative to reduce children's use of tobacco products. But Government cannot solve this problem alone. Everybody must do their share to help parents keep their kids tobacco-free.

I applaud 3M Media for accepting responsibility for the impact billboards have. We must all work together to protect our children from the lures of tobacco.

**Statement on Senate Passage of the  
Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS  
Resources Emergency Act**

*May 2, 1996*

I applaud the Members of Congress for this overwhelming statement of support for the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act. By extending this vital program for 5 additional years, lawmakers of both parties are sending a message of support to thousands of Americans who are living with HIV or AIDS and to their families and friends who offer them love and support each and every day. In its first 5 years of existence, the Ryan White CARE Act has provided high-quality medical care and support services that help to extend the length and improve the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS. I have been proud of our recent success in increasing funding for this program by more than 110 percent in the last 3 years, including a \$105 million increase in the recently enacted budget agreement for fiscal year 1996. I look forward to signing this bill and continuing this record of bipartisan support.

## Remarks at a Dinner Honoring Billy and Ruth Graham

May 2, 1996

Good evening. The first time I ever met Paul Harvey, he and his son played through a foursome I was in on his golf course in Chicago. He never told me the score. But since then he's tried to tell me the score about a lot of other things. *[Laughter]* And I've enjoyed it every time.

To the members of the Graham family, the Members of Congress who are here, ladies and gentlemen: I'm deeply honored to join with you tonight in honoring two of America's finest citizens, two of the world's greatest human resources, Billy and Ruth Graham.

When Billy and Ruth received the Congressional Gold Medal today, they received only the 114th medal in the 220-year history of this country. Since, as Paul Harvey said, George Washington started receiving the first one in 1776, Thomas Edison, Marian Anderson, Elie Wiesel, Winston Churchill—Billy and Ruth Graham belong in their company, and more.

I am going to make a presentation in a moment related to that, but I wanted to say a few words first. I'm very proud that Billy and Ruth have decided to share this honor with the Billy and Ruth Graham children's center of Memorial Mission Hospital in Asheville, North Carolina.

In Galatians 6, St. Paul said that while each of us must make our own efforts to sustain ourselves, we are also reminded to "bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." Sharing this medal in this way does that. But in so many ways Billy and Ruth have fulfilled the law of Christ, in the ministry of the Word going into all nations.

I hardly ever go to a place, as President, Billy Graham hadn't been there before me preaching. *[Laughter]* And I feel like a poor substitute from time to time, because a lot of the time what I'm trying to do is get people to lay down the hatreds of the heart and reach down into their spirit and treat people who are different from them with the same dignity that all God's children are entitled to.

Billy and Ruth have practiced the ministry of the deed. Hundreds of times the Bible

calls upon us to minister to the poor and the needy as they did in trying to help disaster victims in Guatemala and countless other places. And I know yesterday Billy and I were talking about how proud he was of the work that his son, Franklin, has done, and I saw some of that when I sent our troops into Bosnia and I met some people who had worked with Franklin Graham to try to help the poor children in that war-torn land.

Billy and Ruth Graham have practiced the ministry of good citizenship, being friends with Presidents of both parties, counseling them in countless ways, always completely private, always completely genuine. Yesterday we sat in the Oval Office reminiscing and talking about current circumstances, and I asked for Billy Graham's prayers for the wisdom and guidance of God. That is a part of his ministry as well.

Perhaps the most moving example of that came when Billy Graham spoke along with me and a number of others at the first service shortly after the bombing in Oklahoma City. And he knew he was speaking to a vast array of people who had been wounded by that incident. Most of them were Christians, but not all of them were. And yet he sought to speak to all of them, and he gave what I thought was one of the most honest messages I had ever heard a minister of the Word give. And I thought to myself as I watched him give it that only a man completely convicted, completely secure in his own faith, could have looked out at that vast wounded array of human beings and said, "I wish I could tell you that I understand completely why things like this happen. But I don't. Even after all these years, I don't. I don't know why this happened. I don't have an explanation for it. But the God we love is a God of love and mercy amidst all the suffering we are asked to endure. We are not supposed to understand everything but instead to lean on God."

And he made it more powerful because he was able to say to his fellow Americans, "Even after all these years, after I have searched the Scriptures and prayed for wisdom, I do not understand everything. I cannot explain this, but that makes the case for our faith even stronger." I'll remember that for as long as I live.